

**Draft Summary of the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting  
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)  
May 22, 2003**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group (RSWG) on May 22, 2003 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	Interim Projects Update
Attachment 5	Overview of Modeling Workshop
Attachment 6	Recreation and Socioeconomics Resource Action Information Matrix
Attachment 7	Definitions of Matrix Chart-Toppers
Attachment 8	Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Roster

### **Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the RSWG meeting. The Department of Water Resources apologized for the last-minute change in meeting location and any associated inconvenience. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations and the desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

### **Action Items – April 24, 2003 Recreation and Socioeconomics Work Group Meeting**

A summary of the April 24, 2003 RSWG meeting is posted on the Relicensing Website. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

**Action Item #R64:** Consolidate issues and PM&Es into resource actions, tracking how individual items are combined.

Status: DWR staff consolidated issues and PM&Es into resource actions for discussion at the May RSWG meeting. This action item was discussed in the context of a later agenda item, which is summarized in detail below.

**Action Item #R65:** Provide update on interim projects.

Status: Bill Cochran with DWR provided an update on interim projects to the RSWG. Additional details are provided below.

**Action Item #R66:** Revise "Geographic Area Descriptions" to reflect tonight's discussion.

Status: This action has been completed, but a revised version of the document was not distributed to the RSWG. The "Geographic Area Descriptions" will be sent to RSWG participants upon request or distributed for review/information at the next meeting.

Follow-up action item

**Action Item #R61:** Consider providing a public workshop to provide guidance on completing Resource Action Information Form. Notice workshop electronically to all of the Collaborative's work group distribution lists.

Status: DWR decided that rather than hold a workshop on the Resource Action forms, a page of written instructions will be distributed to the Collaborative's work group distribution lists via regular mail and e-mail. The instruction sheet will also be provided to the JPA for distribution. The RSWG was reminded that incomplete forms may be submitted and that this is not a competitive process.

## **Update on Interim Projects**

Bill Cochran provided a status update on the interim projects using a PowerPoint presentation (see Attachment 4). The update was organized into the four categories of interim projects – Category I, II, III, and IV: highlights of the presentation are presented below. Additional details are included in Attachment 4. The RSWG was reminded that DWR did not commit to complete all of the interim projects and that the list represented recommendations provided by the Collaborative.

### **Category 1**

The restroom installation/upgrades at Enterprise, the shooting range, model airplane site, South Forebay, Saddle Dam, and Wilbur Road Launch ramp will be completed this summer. Improvements at the Loafer Creek Equestrian Camp are complete and considered “state-of-the-art.” Access to the group staging area at the Diversion Pool is via a locked gate with permits easily obtainable from DWR. The improvements at the Saddle Dam are complete with the exception of installing hitching posts and the restroom. The gravel parking area is generally not considered a maintenance problem but if it becomes an issue, more permanent surfacing will be considered. Materials have been purchased, including an interpretive sign for the Lake Oroville Overlook improvements, but the site work has not started. Improvements have been made at the shooting range including the grading and addition of road base in the parking area and a pipe gate to control access at night. Installation of a restroom is pending. This location is unique because it provides long-distance shooting opportunities. A RSWG participant suggested DWR consider including shade trees or ramadas as part of the improvements. No earthwork has been done in the target area due to wet conditions this spring.

All materials have been purchased for the spillway chute warning system horn. The horn, which can reach levels of 110 dB, will be installed 1/3 of the way up the chute by the end of the summer. The warning system will be manually activated by DWR. The RSWG discussed concerns that this warning system will not be adequate for notification at the low-flow section where people have been stranded and the potential need for another horn near the fish hatchery. Improvements at the model airplane site are ongoing, and include two paved runways, shade armadas and a restroom. Floyd Higgins representing the Oroville Model Airplane Club suggested that DWR evaluate high water marks before placing structures at the site since the water level fluctuates and periodically inundates parts of the area. The re-seeding of Oroville Dam has experienced limited production to date with displays of lupine but few poppies. One participant suggested that poppies frequently take more than one season to germinate.

### **Category 2**

An easement is still needed for the Lakeland Boulevard vehicle access project. A letter has been sent to Union Pacific Railroad requesting the easement, but they have yet to respond. There are other options to providing access that would not require such an easement but would require substantial earthwork and cost. Landscaping at the fish hatchery has not started and Bill confirmed that their focus is primarily on landscaping above the ordinary high water mark and any activities below that will consider the necessary permits and cultural resources. The tournament water-ski site has not been developed at the Afterbay but, coordinating with the Butte Water Ski Club and agencies, buoys will be installed that restrict activity to waterskiing only in one area. Improvements at the day-use parks are in the planning stages and will likely be in the same style as Riverbend Park with paths, picnic areas and landscaping.

### **Category 3**

The height-adjustable swim dock is a project that DWR considers not feasible at this time. Similarly, the winterized floating campsite project will not proceed due to lack of demand and issues with safety and maintenance. The second overlook improvement project is in the planning stages. The site has been surveyed, material amounts have been estimated and a formal engineering estimate will be prepared.

### **Category 4**

This category includes the promotion of existing facilities, development of a boater safety training program and investigation of funding sources for recreation projects. Bill reported that all projects in this category are ongoing and there were several notable accomplishments last year. The RSWG thanked DWR for the commitment to consider projects ahead of the new license issuance and the work completed thus far on the interim projects.

### **Overview of Upcoming Modeling Workshop**

Curtis Creel, Resource Area Manager for the Engineering and Operations Work Group and Modeling Coordinator for the Collaborative, spoke to the RSWG about the upcoming modeling workshop to be held on June 24 (9am to 4pm) at the Kelly Ridge Golf Course Meeting Room. His presentation is provided as Attachment 5. He explained that the upcoming workshop will focus only on operations models and will consist of a modeling overview, details on each operations model, and a discussion of benchmark studies that have been developed to establish baseline conditions and test the system sensitivity. Curtis indicated DWR would host another more intensive workshop in late summer to evaluate model run data with work groups and plan for additional model runs that are necessary to aid in decision making. Curtis reported that each scenario costs approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 and takes about a month or so to complete the iterations, although with time and experience that amount should decrease some. The cost includes considerable human analysis of modeling results. He explained that his objective is to answer the most questions with the fewest numbers of model runs.

### **Release of Economic Background Report/Status and Progress of TRT for Socioeconomic Studies**

Tom Wegge with TCW Economics distributed copies of the Phase 1 Economics Background Report to RSWG participants. Phase 2 of the background report will be completed this summer. Tom described the role of the socioeconomics Technical Review Team (TRT), which includes representatives from the County, State Water Contractors, and the Department of Water Resources. The Phase 1 report represents the results of an approximately 6-month long process that included several reviews and draft report iterations. There are five major topics covered in the report: (1) population; (2) economic base; (3) fiscal indicators; (4) state agency expenditures; and (5) assessed property values. The RSWG was asked to review the report and provide questions and comments at the next RSWG meeting.

Tom clarified that comments provided to date have been from the TRT and responded to by the consulting team directly to the commenting TRT member. New comments provided by the RSWG will be handled in the same manner between the consulting team and the commenter.

Tom reported that Phase 2 of the report is in preparation and will include a description of the recreation tourism economy at Oroville and an analysis of the relationship between lake levels and property values. The description of the recreation tourism economy has been prepared and reviewed by the TRT. It describes the businesses in Oroville that are dependent on recreation and includes a comparison to Shasta County. The property value analysis is in its early stages,

currently focusing on contacting local realtors and collecting property sales data. The next step will include statistical modeling of the data.

The RSWG discussed how the community impact models that are developed as part of Study R-18 would ultimately be included in the modeling package for the project. The recreation visitation models are predictive models that will use hydrology model outputs as one of the inputs. The recreation visitation model for Oroville is expected to be completed by July and will be reviewed by the TRT and then coordinated with the RSWG and Curtis Creel for the modeling needs. It was clarified that all studies, including the recreation visitation modeling, will not evaluate pre-project conditions; for the purpose of the Relicensing process, baseline is existing conditions. The next TRT meeting is June 18, 2003.

## **Resource Action Discussion**

At the last RSWG meeting, DWR was asked to provide more detail for the statements that were included in the PM&E matrix to describe potential resource actions. DWR completed this task for the Diversion Pool and the Thermalito Forebay (see Attachment 6). The definition of the "chart-toppers" included in the matrix was provided as a separate handout (see Attachment 7). The purpose of the matrix is to evaluate resource actions on a common level. The next step for the RSWG is to determine if the projects or resource actions developed for the matrix are appropriate and to begin thinking about how to prioritize the potential resource actions. Ultimately, the RSWG will need to determine what resource actions most efficiently address needs and other objectives; it is hoped the RSWG can generally agree which are most feasible and should be immediately included among alternatives analyzed as part of the Preliminary Draft Environmental Assessment (PDEA). Agreement to move potential resource actions to the PDEA group does not indicate consensus for any on the list unless noted. These RSWG-endorsed actions will be forwarded to the PDEA group to begin analysis; the remaining proposals could be considered in the settlement agreement and could be included in the environmental analysis FERC conducts as part of its NEPA requirements. The Facilitator described how other work groups are approaching the evaluation of resource actions and noted the Environmental Work Group recently had each participant identify their top two or three as a means of prioritizing for further information development.

The Facilitator explained that the PDEA represents a "practice" NEPA document, which FERC will use to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The goal is to provide as much of or all the information necessary for FERC to complete their analysis. Components of the PDEA will closely resemble sections of an EIS but the potential resource actions will not likely be arranged in discrete alternatives. FERC will take jurisdiction over protection and mitigation measures, so it is important for the Licensee to provide adequate information in the PDEA relative to those resource actions. A participant asked whether settlement agreement proposals would get the same level of analysis as PDEA items. The Facilitator believed that they do but the analysis may occur on different time schedules. She will get clarification and confirm this statement. Doug Rischbieter, Recreation and Socioeconomics Resource Area Manager for DWR explained that the PDEA proposals that the Work Group feels FERC will require should be forwarded to the PDEA group as soon as possible. He also noted that the ultimate product of this process will be a Recreation Management Plan which will include both the protection and mitigation measures and agreed-to enhancement measures (non-FERC required actions). The Recreation Management Plan will not be analyzed in the preliminary PDEA but it will be in the formal EIS.

The RSWG discussed the process for evaluating and then developing the list to be sent for inclusion in the PDEA analysis and how the process would coordinate resource actions from other work groups for consideration when some may conflict. The RSWG agreed they need more time to process and evaluate resource actions and they may need to initiate task forces or sub-groups

within work group meetings to focus on specific topics and make recommendations to the larger RSWG.

The Facilitator noted that the RSWG first needs to categorize the resource actions and answer some questions about each one before they can be prioritized. The homework for the RSWG is to review the list of resource actions in the matrix for clarity and completeness and suggest any additions or deletions of resource actions. The RSWG will also review the chart-topper sheet and provide all comments to Doug Rischbieter (doug@water.ca.gov).

## **Other**

The Facilitator explained that in conformance with the Process Protocols, the Plenary Group has requested that rosters be prepared that identify participants in the various work groups and the Plenary Group. The Facilitator distributed preliminary rosters to the RSWG (see Attachment 8). The rosters include participant name, primary and alternate representative for the participant, contact information for the primary representative, and the ultimate decision-making authority for the participant. The Facilitator requested feedback and revisions on the roster from the RSWG as soon as possible. Eventually, a placard will be developed for participants to use when a call for consensus occurs within either a work group or Plenary Group meeting. One placard will be developed per participant so even if multiple representatives for a particular participant are present, the participant will have only one voice when consensus is called for.

## **Next Steps**

The Facilitator noted that the regular location for the RSWG meetings is not available on the June date so an alternate location will be identified. The RSWG agreed on the following meeting date/time:

Date: Thursday, June 26, 2003  
Time: 6:00 to 10:00 PM  
Location: To be determined

## **Action Items**

The following list of action items identified by the RSWG includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and item status.

**Action Item #R67:** Send revised "Geographic Area Descriptions" to RSWG participants.  
**Responsible:** DWR/Consulting team  
**Due Date:** June 26, 2003

**Action Item #R68:** Review and provide comments to the Phase 1 Economics Background Report at the next RSWG meeting.  
**Responsible:** RSWG  
**Due Date:** June 26, 2003

**Action Item #R69:** Provide feedback/revisions on the RSWG roster to the Facilitator.  
**Responsible:** RSWG  
**Due Date:** As soon as possible

**Action Item #R70:** Confirm that the settlement agreement proposals would get the same level of analysis as PDEA items.  
**Responsible:** Facilitator  
**Due Date:** June 26, 2003

**Action Item #R71:** Review list of resource actions, add/delete resource actions as appropriate, review the chart-topper sheet, and provide comments to Doug Rischbieter at DWR.  
**Responsible:** RSWG  
**Due Date:** June 16, 2003